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C O N F I D E N T I A L ACCRA 002205

SIPDIS

EB/TRA/OTP FOR BMATTINGLEY
STATE PASS DOT,FAA, AND TSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/26/2010

TAGS: [FAIR](#) [GH](#) [NI](#)

SUBJECT: BELLVIEW PILOTS ALLEGE COVERUP OF EXCESSIVE FLIGHT
HOURS

Classified By: Charge d'Affaires Jerry Lanier for Reasons 1.5 (B and D)

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[1](#)1. (C) On October 27, Ghana International Airlines' (GIA) Amcit Vice President of Operations Albert Vitale (STRICTLY PROTECT) told Econoff in confidence that he had recently interviewed four Ghanaian pilots currently employed by Nigeria-based Bellview Airlines for pilot positions at GIA. Vitale said he offered a position to one of the pilots, Flying Officer Ernest Eshun. Eshun was due to leave Bellview for GIA in the next month, but was killed while copiloting Bellview Flight B3210, which crashed in Nigeria on October [1](#)22.

[1](#)2. (C) Vitale said Eshun had stated during his interview that he wanted to leave Bellview because of the poor working conditions. According to Vitale, Eshun also said Bellview management routinely worked pilots 180 to 190 hours per month, and forced the pilots to alter flight logs to conceal the long hours. Vitale stated that two of the other three Bellview pilots he interviewed corroborated Mr. Eshun's assertion.

[1](#)3. (C) Comment: GIA is a potential competitor of Bellview, and Embassy can neither confirm nor refute these assertions. However, Econoffs have known Albert Vitale for almost two years and he has been a highly reliable and accurate source on aviation issues in Ghana. End Comment

LANIER